GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:880
ANSWERED ON:01.03.2016
Protection of Rhinoceros
Teli Shri Rameswar

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is contemplating any comprehensive plan for conservation and protection of rare Indian one horn rhinoceros as well as other species of rhinoceros in the country;
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) the steps/measures taken by the Government to prevent the rampant poaching of these endangered animals in various National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries;
(d) whether the Government has made any effort to seek global support to stop the clandestine international black market of rhino horn; and
(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a)&(b) Great Indian one-horned rhinoceros is one of the seventeen species identified for Recovery programme for critically endangered species, a component under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats. Under this scheme Central assistance is provided for the recovery and protection of the species.

Most of the habitats of Great Indian one-horned rhinoceros have been covered under Project Tiger. These include Kaziranga Tiger Reserve, Manas Tigere Reserve, Dudhwa Tiger Reserve. Jaldapara Wildlife Sanctuary of West Bengal; Orang National Park and Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary of Assam are also dedicated for conservation of Great Indian one horned rhinoceros.

(c) The Government has taken following steps to prevent poaching of wild animals including Rhinoceros in the country:
i. Legal protection has been provided to wild animals including rhinoceros against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

ii. In addition to provision of stringent punishment for the offenders, the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that is used for committing wildlife offence(s).

iii. Financial and technical assistance is provided to the State/ Union Territory Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes for providing better protection to wildlife including endangered species and improvement of its habitat.

iv. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.

v. The State/Union Territory Governments have been requested to intensify patrolling in and around the Protected Areas.

vi. Strict vigil is maintained by the officials of State Departments of Forests and Wildlife.

(d)&(e) India is a party to Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of wild fauna and flora (CITES) which regulates the international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants including Rhinos so it does not threaten their survival. This Ministry has also appointed Additional Director, Wildlife Crime Control Bureau as focal point for CITES Task Force for dealing matters related to illegal trade of rhino horns in India.

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